

Mary Walsh James to Henry James, 1 July [1873], from Cambridge

ALS Houghton, bMS Am 1093.1 (48)

1 Cambridge

2 July 1<sup>st</sup>

3 My darling Harry

4 We were all astir at an early hour this morning to give Alice & Aunt Kate an  
5 early breakfast—and speed them on their journey— They go at once to Quebec and the  
6 Saginay and expect to meet their New York friends at Bellow's Falls this afternoon—  
7 June has claimed in her last days her own, and has given us in concluding three tremendous  
8 days of heat; ^which are[^] aggravated by the dreadful drought from which we have been  
9 suffering, the last five weeks. This calamity has been far spread, but the spell has been at  
10 last broken in adjacent places, which gives us hope. Every thing~~s~~ is burnt up, and the grass  
11 in the College grounds, can hardly be distinguished in colour from the paths— Alice went  
12 off in fine spirits having borne the heat and preparations for the journey wonderfully—  
13 Aunt K. is in constant astonishment at the improvement she sees in her. She says she  
14 seems an entirely different person from this time last year—  
15 They intend to spend a week in Quebec and with the advice of the Howells telegraphed ~~the~~  
16 Miss Lanes for rooms. Her reply was that she had 4 rooms at their disposal, and they are  
17 looking forward to quite a novel experience in ~~ther~~ house—  
18 Will has gone out to Milton to-day to see John Bancroft and Frank Washburne; and  
19 expects to start on Thursday on a little trip along the coast. He thinks he will go first to  
20 Mongolia about 4 miles from Manchester where a good hotel has been opened in a lovely

21 situation, where he will find lots of Cambridge and Boston people—  
22 He thinks he will after a week go on to York, Saco pool, Prouts Neck and bring up at M<sup>t</sup>  
23 Desert. This is his present programme— Poor fellow! I wish it was possible for him to  
24 learn to live by the day, and not have to bear to-day the burden of coming months and years  
25 He says the question of being able to do the work that lies before him next winter, and  
26 indeed his whole future career, weighs so heavily upon him that it keeps him from rallying  
27 After a very serious talk with him yesterday, Father's advice to him was to give up the idea  
28 of working next winter. He is not obliged to give up the place until the 20<sup>th</sup> Aug and then  
29 D<sup>r</sup> Dwight stands ready to take it. The summer will do him no good with this point  
30 unsettled, and I fear unless his resignation is given in at once, and the whole subject  
31 dismissed from his mind, that his recreation will yield him neither pleasure nor profit. He  
32 is very desponding about himself, but says that Alice's ~~condition~~ [^]recovery[^] and yours,  
33 especially Alice's (for he considers her weak nervous condition very like his own present  
34 one) give him hope. He is looking for a letter from you in answer to one he wrote you  
35 asking your advice about Italy for him next winter You will regret as much as we all do the  
36 necessity he was under to give up his trip to the West. It would have cost too much, and  
37 would have been fatiguing to him, and in his present condition of mind he would not have  
38 been helpful to the boys. He has such a morbid sympathy with every form of trouble or  
39 privation, that he is not strengthening where he most wishes to be— For instance, he broke  
40 out last evening on the piazza into a most pathetic lamentation over the servants who had  
41 only one arm-chair in the kitchen I promised him at once that I would supply the want, and  
42 that there should be three—  
43 You will without doubt fall some day soon into the arms of M<sup>rs</sup> Lombard and Fanny, who

44 I am told are to spend the summer at Montreux. They are both I imagine great invalids, so  
45 avoid committing yourself father than you can help with them.

46 Father has got no final answer from the Galaxy people and thinks it more prudent not to  
47 rush them for a while—

48 We had been reading aloud your Albano paper, and thinking it very delightful; when  
49 Howells came in, and in answer to some inquiries about you Father told him about it; and  
50 [^]he[^] said that he would like to take it with him, and if possible put it in the Sept. No of  
51 the A. M. The Aug No will have your Roman rides and your story he will work in when he  
52 can do so.

53 Father & I will have a renewal of our last summer's loneliness for three or four weeks, but it  
54 will be easily borne, in view of our little trip to meet our travellers at the end— If you my  
55 precious one were only one of them!

56 With a heart full of love

Your loving Mother

## Notes

- 6 Saginay • Saguenay River, Quebec
- 6 their New York friends • Helen Rodgers Wyckoff Perkins, Henry Wyckoff, and Helen Ripley
- 15-16 Howells telegraphed ~~the~~ Miss Lanes • William Dean Howells's 1873 novel, *A Chance Acquaintance*, was set in part in a Quebec boarding house; according to Alice James, in her 26 September 1873 letter to Annie Ashburner, "the Misses Lane's boarding house" in Quebec was "made famous by Mr. Howells story" (see "The Letters of Alice James to Anne Ashburner," 32)
- 18 John Bancroft • businessman and art enthusiast John Chandler Bancroft (1835-1901)
- 20 Mongolia • Magnolia, part of Gloucester, Massachusetts, next to Manchester, Massachusetts
- 29 D<sup>f</sup> Dwight • Harvard anatomy professor Thomas Dwight (1843-1911)
- 34 a letter from you • Henry James to William James, 18 June 1873
- 34 one he wrote to you • William James to Henry James, 25 May 1873 (see *The Correspondence of William James* 1: 207-10)
- 48 your Albano paper • "Roman Neighborhoods," *Atlantic Monthly* December 1873: 671-80
- 51 your Roman rides • "Roman Rides," *Atlantic Monthly* August 1873: 190-98
- 51 your story • "The Last of the Valerii," *Atlantic Monthly* January 1874: 69-85

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